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Licences of firearms in Cuddapah.

* 29 Q.—Sri H. M. JAGANNATHAM : Will the Hon. the Minister for Law be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that there were only 24 licences of small firearms like pistols and revolvers in the whole of Cuddapah district and whether the Collector of Cuddapah cancelled the licences of all in the district except that of one man by name D. B. K. Char;

(b) whether it is a fact that among the persons whose licences were cancelled there are six Lawyers, two Medical Officers, two Retired Inspectors of Police, title-holders and Presidents and ex-Presidents of District Boards;

(c) whether it is a fact that in spite of the District Superintendent of Police's recommendation to renew all the licences, the Collector denied the same to the persons concerned;

(d) whether it is a fact that Mr. C. L. Narasimha Reddi, B.A., B.L., of Cuddapah, an ex-President of District Board and member of the All-India Congress Committee requested the District Magistrate by a letter to furnish him the grounds on which the licences were cancelled so that he could appeal to the Government and same was declined;

(e) whether Mr. C. L. Narasimha Reddi subsequently addressed the Chief Secretary to the Government of Madras on the matter;

(f) whether the Central Government has asked the Provincial Government for information about this matter; and

(g) what action the Government of Madras have taken in the matter?

The Hon. Sri K. BHASHYAM :—" (a) The facts stated in the question are incorrect. Forty-five pistol and revolver licences were in force in the Cuddapah district at the end of December 1945. Of these, ten were removed from the registers as the licensees left the district, one licensee died, and one did not apply for renewal. Of the remaining thirty-three licences, twenty-two licences were not renewed for 1946; the rest, that is eleven pistol and revolver licences including the licence issued to Sri D. B. K. Char, are in force in 1946 in the Cuddapah district.

" (b) Among the persons whose licences were not renewed for 1946, there are seven lawyers including an ex-President of the Cuddapah District Board, two title-holders of whom one is the President of the Cuddapah District Board, two doctors, two retired Sub-Inspectors of Police, one retired Inspector of Police and one Electrical Engineer.

" (c) The District Superintendent of Police recommended the renewal of all the licences that were refused except that of one person who was reported to be too old to handle a firearm. His recommendation was to the effect that all 'the other licences may be renewed.' It was apparent that in making this recommendation which was vague and general in terms the District Superintendent of Police had not taken into consideration the instructions issued by the Government

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from time to time to 'tighten up' the administration of the Arms Act in this Province and that he had not also examined each case on its merits. Besides, he had been in the district only for a few days. The District Magistrate therefore had to consider each case on its merits with due regard to the instructions issued by the Government. In view of the unsettled conditions at that time, the general policy allowed the issue of licences only in cases where there was urgent necessity for firearms. The District Magistrate refused licences in cases where he was convinced that the applicants were not in genuine need of firearms.

"(d), (e) & (f) The answer is in the affirmative.

"(g) As the then Government were convinced that the reasons adduced by the District Magistrate for refusing renewal of the licences in question were on the whole adequate they did not consider it necessary to take any further action in the matter."

SRI R. SURYANARAYANA RAO :—" If the application is renewed, will the Hon. Minister reconsider the question of granting licence? "

THE HON. SRI K. BHASHYAM :—" Conditions have changed, times have changed, and orders also will have to be changed."

Representation of labour on the Excise Licensing Boards.

* 30 Q.—SRI P. R. K. SARMA : Will the Hon. the Minister for Hindu Religious Endowments be pleased to state—

(a) whether there is provision for representation of labour on the Excise Licensing Boards at Madras and elsewhere;

(b) how the representatives for Labour, if any, are elected;

(c) who was appointed to the Madras Licensing Board on the last occasion;

(d) how many votes he secured and how many were secured by the other candidate;

(e) whether the Government or the Minister have received any representations against the selection; and

(f) what action the Government have taken or propose to take in the matter?

THE HON. SRI K. KOTI REDDI :—" (a) & (b) The rules for the constitution and conduct of Business by Excise Licensing Boards (City and Mufassal) provide that one member of the Board shall be a member of the communities eligible for the ameliorative measure undertaken by the Labour Department or of the labouring classes to be elected from amongst recognized labour organizations, if any. In the absence of such organizations the member is nominated by the Commissioner of Labour in respect of the Madras City Licensing Board and by the Collector of the district in the case of mufassal boards. Under rule 6 (a) of the Excise Licensing Board Rules, if anybody allowed to elect representatives fails to